Mass Killings Spur Moralizing Abroad

LONDON, Aug. 2 (UPI)—The Austin mass slayings were front-page news throughout the world today, prompting more than a little moralizing about the state of American society.

In Russia the official news agency Tass said the sniper killings showed that "crime has become a national problem in the United States." Last week Soviet authorities announced stern new measures to curb a rising Russian crime wave.

"Sudden violence is familiar in America," the Sun of London said. "Yesterday it came dramatically to Austin."

The current New Statesman of London carries a commentary on the use of firearms in the United States, published several days before the Texas killings. It says that "since 1900 approximately 750,000 persons in the U.S. have been killed by guns"—more than America has lost in all the foreign wars in which it has been engaged, according to the weekly.

A commentator for the Japanese news agency Kyodo said the slaughter "resulted from an unbalanced situation because of an increased gap between the rich and the poor, some of whom are unwillingly sent to Vietnam.

The Japanese broadcaster said the shootings also showed "there is a trend among the young people in the U.S. to seek stimulative action against their growing discontent with society."

Throughout Europe, the headlines were uniformly big and black. "Horrible slaughter in the city of Austin—a mad ex-Marine in Texas," was a representative sample from Rome's Il Paese.